AMENDMENTS

In the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of the claims. The status of each claim is indicated. Amendments are shown with additions underlined and deletions in strikethrough text. No new matter is added by these amendments.

Listing of Claims:

1.-30. (Cancelled)

31. (Currently amended) A method comprising:

associating with an electronic message authorized by an originator identification data uniquely identifying said electronic message;

storing said identification data;

sending to an intended recipient said electronic message with said identification data;

receiving on behalf of the intended recipient a confirmation request including said identification data and requesting confirmation that said electronic message was authorized by the originator;

comparing said identification data received in said confirmation request to said stored identification data; and

upon determining that said identification data received in said confirmation request matches said stored identification data, responding to said confirmation request, affirming said electronic message was authorized by the originator.

32.   (Previously presented)   The method of claim 31, wherein said electronic message includes one of a text message, VoIP message, or instant message.

33.   (Previously presented)   The method of claim 31, wherein said identification data is derived at least in part from information contained in one or more of a message header, a message text, and a timestamp, of said electronic message.

34.   (Previously presented)   The method of claim 31, wherein said identification data is included in a message header of said electronic message.

35.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 31, wherein said sending includes attaching said identification data as an attachment to said electronic message.

36.   (Previously presented)   The method of claim 31, wherein said identification data is included in said message text.

37.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 31, further comprising:

        calculating a checksum for said message text; and

        including said checksum in said identification data.

38.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 31, wherein said receiving a confirmation request includes receiving said confirmation request via port-to-port communication.

39.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 31, wherein said receiving a confirmation request includes receiving a confirming electronic message.

40.   (Previously presented)   The method of claim 39, wherein said confirming electronic message includes one of a text message, VoIP message, or instant message.

41.   (Previously presented)   The method of claim 31, wherein said responding to said confirmation request includes responding via port-to-port communication.

42.   (Previously presented)   The method of claim 31, wherein said responding to said confirmation request includes responding with a return electronic message.

43.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 42, wherein said return electronic message is one of a text message, VoIP message, or instant message.

44.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 31, wherein said comparing is performed at a device different from a device at which said associating is performed.

45.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 31, wherein said comparing is performed at a device different from a device at which said sending is performed.

46.   (Previously presented) The system of claim 31, wherein said identification data is an alphanumeric string.

47.   (Currently amended) A system comprising:

> a sending module operable to:

>> send to an intended recipient an electronic message authorized by an originator and identification data uniquely identifying said electronic message, said identification data being stored for subsequent access; and

> a confirming module operable to:

>> receive on behalf of the intended recipient a confirmation request including said identification data and requesting confirmation that said electronic message was authorized by the originator;

compare said identification data received in said confirmation request to said stored identification data; and

upon determining that said identification data received in said confirmation request matches said stored identification data, respond to said confirmation request, affirming said electronic message was authorized by the originator.

48. (Previously presented) The system of claim 47, wherein said sending module is operable to send to the intended recipient an electronic message that includes one of ~~an email,~~ a text message, VoIP message, or instant message.

49. (Previously presented) The system of claim 47, wherein said identification data was generated from information contained in one or more of a message header, a message text, and a timestamp, of said electronic message.

50. (Previously presented) The system of claim 47, wherein said identification data is an alphanumeric string.

51. (Previously presented) The system of claim 47, wherein said identification data is included in a message header of said electronic message.

52. (Cancelled)

53. (Previously presented) The system of claim 47, wherein said identification data is included in a message text of said electronic message.

54.   (Previously presented) The system of claim 47, wherein said sending includes attaching said identification data as an attachment to said electronic message.

55.   (Previously   presented)   The   system   of   claim   47,   further   comprising:
        calculating a checksum for said message text; and
        including said checksum in said identification data.

56.   (Previously presented) The system of claim 47, wherein said confirmation module is operable to receive said confirmation request via port-to-port communication.

57.   (Previously presented) The system of claim 47, wherein said confirmation module is operable to respond to said confirmation request via port-to-port communication.

58.   (Previously presented) The system of claim 47, wherein said confirmation module is operable to receive said confirmation request as a confirming electronic message.

59.   (Previously presented) The system of claim 58, wherein said confirming electronic message is one of a text message, VoIP message, or instant message.

60.   (Previously presented) The system of claim 47, wherein said confirmation module is operable to respond to said confirmation request with a return electronic message.

61.   (Previously presented) The system of claim 60, wherein said return electronic message is one of a text message, VoIP message, or instant message.

62.   (Currently amended) A method comprising:

receiving a confirmation request to confirm that an electronic message sent to an intended recipient was authorized by an originator identified in the electronic message, the confirmation request including identification data purporting to uniquely identify the electronic message;

searching a data store, separate from said electronic message, for said identification data; and

upon determining that said data store does not contain said identification data, responding to said confirmation request, denying the electronic message was authorized by the originator.

63.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 62, wherein said receiving a confirmation request includes receiving said confirmation request via port-to-port communication.

64.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 62, wherein said responding to said confirmation request includes responding via port-to-port communication.

65.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 62, wherein said receiving a confirmation request includes receiving a confirming electronic message.

66.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 65, wherein said confirming electronic message is one of a text message, VoIP message, or instant message.

67.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 62, wherein said responding to said confirmation request includes responding with a return electronic message.

68.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 67, wherein said return electronic message is one of a text message, VoIP message, or instant message.

69.   (Currently amended) A method comprising:

receiving a confirmation request to confirm that an electronic message sent to an intended recipient was authorized by an originator identified in the electronic message, the confirmation request including identification data purporting to uniquely identify the electronic message;

searching a data store, independent of said electronic message, for said identification data; and

upon determining that said data store contains said identification data, responding to said confirmation request, affirming the electronic message was authorized by the originator.

70.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 69, wherein said receiving a confirmation request includes receiving said confirmation request via port-to-port communication.

71.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 69, wherein said responding to said confirmation request includes responding via port-to-port communication.

72.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 69, wherein said receiving a confirmation request includes receiving a confirming electronic message.

73.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 72, wherein said confirming electronic message is one of a text message, VoIP message, or instant message.

74.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 69, wherein said responding to said confirmation request includes responding with a return electronic message.

75.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 74, wherein said return electronic message is one of a text message, VoIP message, or instant message.

76.   (Currently amended) A method comprising:

receiving from a sending device a first electronic message authorized by an originator, said first electronic message containing information identifying the originator;

sending to a confirmation device a first confirmation request requesting confirmation that said first electronic message was authorized by the originator;

receiving a response to said first confirmation request affirming said first electronic message was authorized by the originator;

allowing said first electronic message to be further processed according to rules for processing of confirmed electronic messages directed to the intended recipient;

receiving from the sending device a second electronic message authorized by the originator, said second electronic message containing information identifying the originator; and

sending to the confirmation device a second confirmation request requesting confirmation that said second electronic message was authorized by the originator.

77.   (Currently amended) The method of claim 76, wherein each of said first electronic message and said second electronic message includes one of an email, a text message, VoIP message, or instant message.

78.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 76, wherein said sending to a confirmation device includes sending said first confirmation request and said second confirmation request via port-to-port communication.

79.   (Previously presented)   The method of claim 76, wherein said receiving a response includes receiving the response via port-to-port communication.

80.   (Cancelled)

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81.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 76, wherein each of said first confirmation request and said second confirmation request is a confirming electronic message.

82.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 81, wherein said confirming electronic message is one of a text message, VoIP message, or instant message.

83.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 76, wherein said response to said first confirmation is a return electronic message.

84.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 83, wherein said return electronic message is one of a text message, VoIP message, or instant message.